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PRACTICAL AIDS IN TEACHING

ENGLISH

GRAMMAR - COMPOSITION

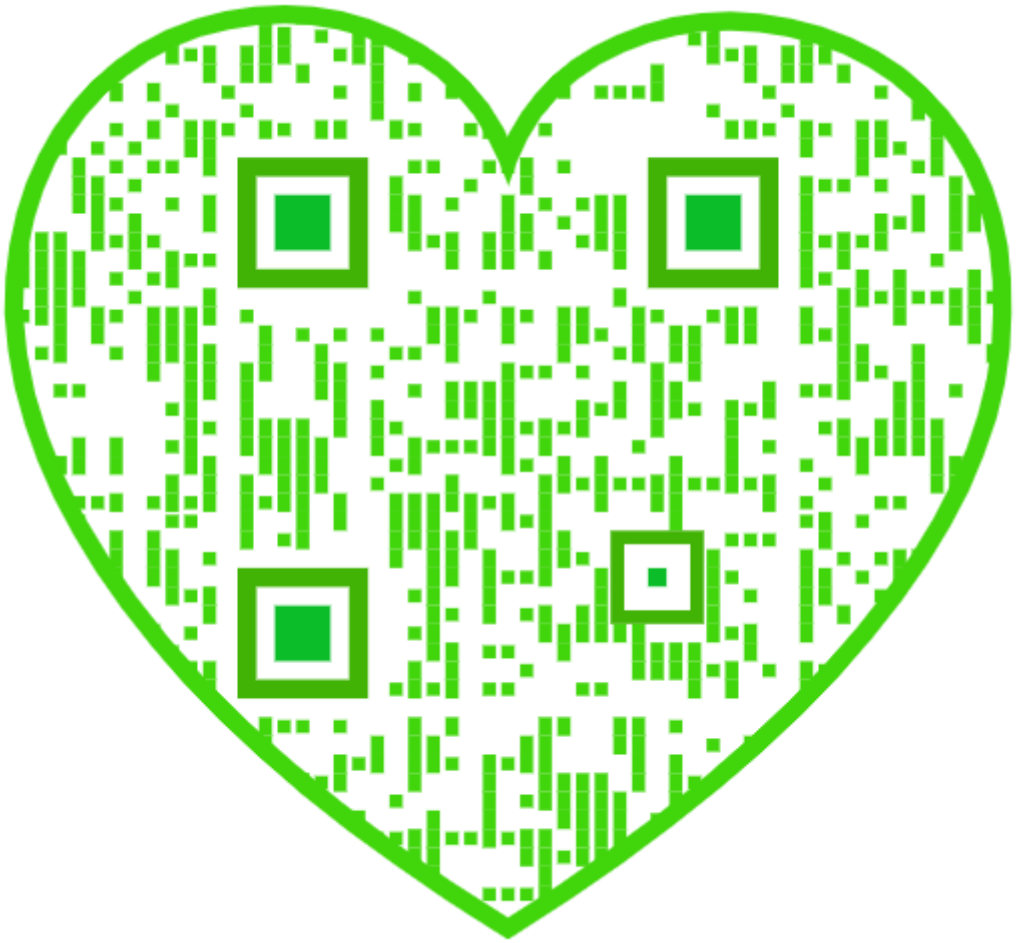
AND

SPELLING

By

Wm. W. Dixon and Matilda M. Miller

Collaborators



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GRAMMAR - COMPOSITION

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INCLUDING A MONOGRAPH ON THE
"PUBLIC LIBRARY"

Collaborated by

WM. W. DIXON
Principal Industrial and Continuation Schools

and

MATILDA M. MILLER
Principal Sixth Ward Public School
Secretary Northwestern Wisconsin Teachers' Association
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

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FOREWORD

A year ago it was said that there has been no progress in the teaching of English in this part of the state during the past twenty years. There may be some truth in this statement.

Progress for the many comes through the ability and efforts of the few. Leaders in any line of thought are few. There is but one Edison, one Marconi, one Henry Ford, and one Booker T. Washington; there was but one Columbus, one Lincoln, one Westinghouse, and one Grant. The same is true in the teaching of English, as it is in statesmanship, in war, and in industry. Progress for the mass of mankind, for teachers in general, and for teachers of English, comes by following leaders. There is no other way. The first step in progress in the teaching of English then is to determine who are the leaders, and the next is to become a student and follower of those leaders. Growth comes by effort. If we study the writings of the leaders and apply what they teach in our work, adapting it as best we can, we are making progress, provided we have chosen the right leaders.

Who have been the leaders—the organizers—in the teaching of English in the elementary and secondary schools in the past several years? No doubt this is a question about which we might differ. The writer wishes to name Percival Chubb of New York, Barrett Wendell and Samuel Thurber of Harvard University, and Charles De Garmo now of Cornell University as leaders in the teaching of English. Mr. Chubb has published a book entitled, **The Teaching of English**; Mr. Wendell has a book entitled, **English Composition**; Mr. De Garmo has published his **Language Lessons**; and Mr. Thurber contributes articles on English to magazines. Carpenter's **Composition and Rhetoric** is a helpful text. It is clear in thought and statement. These publications are excellent—they are the best the writer has found.

Then, if progress has not been made in this part of Wisconsin in the teaching of English, of late years, it is not the fault of these men, because they have been writing and publishing books for many years. There are other leaders in English, but the writer has found help in studying the writings of the above named men. They are full of life. Every teacher of English should become thoroughly acquainted with their writings.

The short articles in this pamphlet are the results of the writer's studying the ideas of the men named above, along with others who have specialized in the teaching of English. He has found that the most virile

thought on English comes from Boston, Harvard University and New York City. The masters in English are in the East.

The market is flooded with Language Lesson texts, but most of them are useless.

The articles in this pamphlet are printed in the hope that they may be of some help to young teachers in their teaching of a most difficult subject—that of English. English is a very severe subject to handle with success. For most teachers, composition is a baffling subject. They fail in it. And they fail because of lack of special training in the art of teaching it. Better results would follow more thorough special training. The teaching of English has both a psychology and a pedagogy, and when these are not understood failure must result.

Language Work

The child learns English only when he gives interested, delighted, and eager attention. He learns English when an exciting story is read or told to him and when he and his teacher discuss the characters and events of the story; he learns English when he reads, hears, talks about, or writes about whatever is of boyish interest, or which belongs to his world; he learns English when he hears people talk about things in which he is interested. He does not learn English by means of that which is dry, formal, and uninteresting; but, rather by means of that which is interesting, exciting, pleasing, boyish or girlish. The dignified, pedagogic, disciplining, pedant who faithfully follows some analytic Language Lessons is not an ideal teacher of English.

Interest is one key that opens the gates which lead to the child's soul. It is the magic key which will make your efforts at all worth while. As a teacher of English you should know your public library. A teacher should have a list of splendid books which he knows will interest his pupils. Different books will interest different children. Keep a child reading; but not to excess. A child should never read a book through which he does not like. Fit your recommendation of books to boys and girls individually. If the children do considerable reading at home, there will be an abundance of interesting subjects to talk about in the class. This is splendid oral composition. Following the oral discussion, a little written work should be done. The writing should be about some small and interesting event.

Great pains must be taken as to the form of the written work. Whatever your pupils write must be written for your eye, for your criticism and commendation. They should not write for the waste basket. Always find something to praise in a composition. Criticise kindly and helpfully. The personality of the teacher is an important factor in the teaching of English. The teacher should be encouraging, natural, appreciative, and pleasing in voice and manner. Some requirements must be positive and formal—spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc., are rigid. Other requirements may be elastic and relative, as the choice of words, or phrases.

The child learns English in his home, from his associates, and from his reading; he absorbs his English from his environment. The teacher should shape that environment by making the child's work in English interesting by supplying pleasing and exciting stories, events, and reading

books to the child. To effectively teach English the teacher must become a part of the child's environment. That part of his environment which comes to his life through the teacher must be good, kind, interesting, lovable and communicable. English should be taught through stories, poems, events, and personal experiences. The child acquires his language by unconscious absorption from his environment. The teacher should shape and control that environment all he can through good speech, abundance of good reading books from the library, through wisely conducted written work, and through chosing stories and poems adapted to child life. The teacher must make him hear good speech, see good speech, speak good speech, read good speech, and write good speech.

Primary Grade Composition

Composition is both oral and written. Composition is expression in school. There is too little of oral composition done in the schools. The ear is too little trained. In the written work we must expect from the children rough, free, hearty, work. Good form, good penmanship, and the power to compose, will come in due time. In the first few years the thought must be supplied the child. Original written work, then, in these years would be out of place. Some originality in thought should be required, however. Portions of the regular lessons should be discussed originally in the interest of the organization of thought. Each composition should be short—from a short sentence or two in the first and second years, to a short paragraph or pair of short paragraphs in the third and fourth years. Enjoyment of the work and clearness of statements should be important ends to attained here. In the oral work at this stage, the child should be trained in clearness in expression; his statements should be connected and direct; and ill-usage should be corrected. As are a child's oral expression, so will his written habits tend to become. This is the most opportune age for habit formation. Much oral composition work is the great need now. The work should be very simple. The writing will be large, bold, uneven and crooked. The paper should be unlined; the pencil should be large and soft. Only the very short paragraph should be used now. In due time the child's work will develop into an art. Throughout these early years there should be conversations upon the reading lesson, familiar and common industries, common domesticated animals, fairy tales, Mother Goose Stories, pictures, fables, biographies, copying short paragraphs and verses, writing dictated sentences, reciting pieces, the meaning and use of words, the literature belonging to the grades, and drill in form.

Drill upon form; be loyal to the facts of form here. Very little originality is expected. Following directions to fix habits of form is the greatest need now. All this requires ingenuity and labor of the teacher. There should be a great deal of this work during the second, third and fourth years. There should be some written work daily. Poor work should not be accepted. When the pupil has become well acquainted with the mechanics of composition, he is then ready to give his attention to the thought side of composition work, but not before. The child learns here that a sentence is the expression of a complete thought. Formal grammar begins here.

The theory, that "a child should always have something to say before he writes," is out of date. The doctrine that form and content can

be acquired simultaneously is in direct violation of the law of habit. The law of habit is, "Focalization plus drill in attention". Bagley says, "If one is to speak and write effectively, the **form**, must be largely outside the focus of consciousness." At this time the composition material must be supplied the child. By composition material is meant the thought and the language, the ideas and the words. These should be conveyed through outlines. Simple punctuation must be learned early through copying and dictation exercises. The most important facts of grammar are learned by imitation. Children should be trained to ask for the spelling of words about which they are uncertain.

The child should read his sentence or paragraph aloud to his teacher in the class. If some grammatical error appears, some other child may be called upon to say it in a better way. The children having errors in their work may make corrections as directed. It is best not to correct a child while he is reciting. He should be encouraged to talk; we want him to talk; we want him to express his thought, and he should not be interrupted. Criticisms should follow his recitation. We want him to talk, (1) to find out whether his knowledge is well organized or not, and (2) because his oral work determines the character of his written work. The reading lesson should be discussed before it is read. The discussion reveals the thought to the child and it fixes new words in his mind through the ear. He can then read it more naturally. In making corrections the pupil is to look at his book, the lesson upon the board; ask questions of his teacher; erase and interlineate. Rub out and rewrite, but do not recopy. Generally, each child is encouraged to correct his own work. Once in a while, however, the teacher corrects the individual papers of the children, where needed, and then each child recopies his work from the corrected paper.

Individuals of the class in the second year, may dictate to the teacher who writes their work upon the board. The class then copies the work from the board. By this method the more advanced pupils help the more backward ones. Also the teacher may dictate the work which is upon the board to the class. They write from her dictation, and thus learn simple punctuation and add new words to their vocabularies. In each dictated lesson the children should know definitely what the teacher's aim is. Each pupil should know the form by which he is to be guided in his composition. The dictation exercises help to teach the formal facts of elementary composition. They are, legible penmanship, correct spelling, a fair degree of grammatical accuracy, the headings of letters, name and address, marginal lines, indentation, use of capitals, simple punctuation, paragraphing, abbreviations, forms of closing letters, folding letters, addressing envelopes, etc.

To Summarize on Composition in the Primary Grades:

It is both oral and written; the oral needs more emphasis; the written work will be crude; very little originality is desired; fix facts of form now; each composition to be very short; facility and clearness are ends to be sought now; use unlined paper and large, soft, lead pencils; make good use of the blackboard; children correct each other's wrong statements; oral recitation helps to organize a child's thought; form is taught principally by means of dictation exercises; in the interest of form, the thought and the language should be supplied the child; follow the law of habit; Fairy Tales and Myths should be used; teacher watches for errors in copied work; reading lesson discussed; a young child is not supposed to have something to say before he writes; child not to be corrected while he is expressing himself.

Ends to be attained:

1. Much more oral composition than is now done.

2. Emphasize form in written work.

3. Facility and correctness in oral expression are ends to be striven for.

4. There should be some effort placed upon the organization of the child's thought.

My choice of all texts that I know on this subject is Charles De Garmo's Language Lessons.

Grammar Grade Composition

Expression is composition. It is perfectly natural for a child to express itself. It is not only natural, but for full and complete intellectual development, it is absolutely necessary—"no impression without its appropriate expression." The child's habits of expression should become agreeable and conform to the usages established by custom. To be satisfactory, and effective in use, it must become an art. This refining process becomes the teacher's great task. Expression, or composition, in schools, should deal with the common experiences familiar to the child's life. The child can not express itself effectively concerning something about which it is not perfectly familiar. It likes to express itself about excursions over the fields, its games, what it has seen and done, etc. It likes to tell you what it knows and knows well. This natural liking to express itself should be taken advantage of by the teacher to train the child to organize its knowledge which will enable the child to effectively express itself. Disorganized knowledge can not be clearly nor interestingly expressed.

The controlling idea in grammar grades' composition is the organization of the child's knowledge and its proper expression. Expression should be both oral and written; the oral should precede the written; both should be clear and interesting, and take on some of the qualities of elegance. If a child's expression be hazy, loose and scrappy, its knowledge is not organized. Good expression will follow well organized thought. Organization of thought, or knowledge, then becomes the grammar grade composition teacher's chief task. In fact there are but two lines of effort before the teachers of elementary composition, (1) that of form, or the simple mechanics of letter writing, and, (2) that of thought organization. The first should receive emphasis in the primary grades and the second in the grammar grades. The acquirement of the second is quite improbable, without its being preceded by the first. Organization of knowledge is absolutely necessary to free and unhampered expression. Poor composition must always follow poor teaching.

A fundamental idea in good composition is good form. Content must be organized, that is, arranged, interrelated, and made available for use; and this is possible only through the mastery of form, the mechanics of composition. This sense of form is acquired through the reading of good literature, through outlining, through dictation exercise work, when properly done, and through intelligent practice in oral and written work. Composition need not be a separate, distinct study. All expression

is composition. Whatever is poorly expressed is not well known. It needs to be better learned. The pupil's task, then, always, is to express himself clearly, concisely, and correctly. Such work is excellent composition. Good story telling is just as important in the grammar grades as in the primary grades. Faulty oral work is a more serious defect than poorly written work. The work should consist of short paragraphs and short, one-page themes, upon subjects entirely familiar to the child. That the proper sequence of facts may obtain, the pupil should be taught to see and arrange the topics in his theme in the best order in which they may be taken. Good grammar grade composition means good organization in form and in content. Oral composition has to do especially with whatever has been poorly expressed in the class, with the end in view of putting it in better form. That his attention may be focused upon form, when that is the end sought, thought and words should be supplied him. Otherwise he becomes confused, and, consequently, does poor work, and sooner or later, becomes discouraged, and wishes to drop out of school because of poor and unpsychological teaching. The child is in the right. Too often he is asked to do the impossible, like writing a theme on "His Summer's Vacation" or to learn form, originate thought, and supply language, in the same effort—all without help. So he fails; he always has, and he always will under such unskilled guidance. Such work drives boys and girls away from school, out upon the streets, away from home, and into the factories. They dislike school and teachers, too many of them, for just such reasons as these.

History gives practice in narration; geography and elementary science in description; arithmetic and history in exposition and argumentation. The child should be trained in these different kinds of expression. The outline will usually be found helpful in this work. Pupils should write all kinds of letters. Books of business and social forms should be used by them as guides. In this work the child has at least four difficulties to contend with, (1) his lack of knowledge, (2) his inability to concentrate, (3) his lack of skill in form, and (4) his meagreness of a usuable vocabulary. His knowledge, then, must become definite, and the mechanics of simple letter writing must become fixed as habits. These attainments on the part of the pupil will depend in large part upon the skill and power of his teacher in this work. The written work must be about some little interesting event that happened in the child's life outside of school, or about some small phase of the child's school work which is clearly understood by the child. The subject treated should be very small in scope, but be an interesting event to the child. To ask a child to write about his summer's vacation is to reveal at once to him that his teacher is a bungler in her work. He is crushed by the impossibility of the task and loses confidence in school work. She had better have asked him to write about the little chicken fight which he

watched with interest this morning at his home. Appropriate dictation work should continue throughout the grammar grades for the sake of practice on form. Should it not be possible to complete a composition on one day, it should be continued from day to day until it is completed. However, each day's work should be criticised and corrected at that period on that day.

A child should have something interesting to say; if it be interesting to him, without doubt, it will be interesting to others; it should be organized in his mind and reduced to an outline; it should be written to some one; and great pains should be taken that it be written in the best form possible for him. If his composition embody these factors, it will be readily seen that he has put forth faithful, honest, effort; and it at once becomes an interesting piece of workmanship. Always encourage the child in his work; always find something to commend. Criticise suggestively, kindly, and helpfully. Blue pencils and red ink are best not used. In composition that deals with facts, clearness is the chief essential. A personal letter should be interesting. Composition requires intensive individual teaching. It should deal with all phases of a child's school work. Composition must be taught as a habit; one theme does not fix a habit; one correction will not remove a wrong habit nor establish a correct one. Constant watchfulness, much advice, suggestion, and correction, given again and again, are absolutely imperative to the training of children in habits of good English. Success in this work means faithful, untiring, individual, teaching. There should be some definite composition work by every pupil every day throughout the elementary school course. Not all composition work, however, should be the expression of the pupil's thought. Where the mechanics of composition is the predominating factor, as it is in the first four years, in the written work, the child should not originate the thought, that is, he should not compose. The child should write a good deal before he communicates. The statement, that "all composition is the expression of thought", is not true. It may never be entirely true throughout the grades. Where form is the end in view, that is, the simple mechanics of letter-writing, which should be the case in the early grades, the child has three difficulties to contend with, (1) thought, (2) language, and (3) form. The great ends in view in these grades are, the organization of knowledge, and its proper expression in good form under the guidance of a skilled teacher with the end in view of developing the self-critical spirit in the child. The cultivation and development of the self-critical spirit in the child is another very important factor. When this is realized, the pupil is then self-helpful, and the main work of composition has been accomplished. As are a child's habits of oral expression, so will his habits of written expression tend to become. In the grammar grades, sentence structure should not receive much attention. Such work belongs to Rhetoric in the high school. Require clearness.

To Summarize on Grammar Grade Composition:

Expression is composition; good expression is good composition; to compose is to organize, to think connectedly; expression is natural; the teacher's task is to refine; organization of knowledge is the root idea of grammar grade composition; organized thought seeks expression; the child stumbles over ill-possessed knowledge; what is not well said is not well known; the saying is a test of the knowing; form is fundamental; form is order; the teacher faces three difficulties; viz., ignorance, unreadiness, and a confused wordiness; use some appropriate dictation work in these years for the sake of form; finish each day's work on that day; develop the self-critical spirit in the child; exercise care as to the choice of words, form and facts; clearness is essential when dealing with facts; anything personal should be interesting; constant watchfulness, much advice, suggestion, and correction, given again and again, are necessary to the training of children in habits of good English; draw on the childs' experiences for material; good composition work requires much individual teaching; emphasize the use of good English always; clear expression means that the knowledge has been well organized; poor expression means that it has not; emphasize form in the early grades; supply language and thought in the early grades; emphasize the organization of thought in the grammar grades; do not tolerate slovenly work; write every day.

My choice of texts is DeGarmo's Language Lessons.

Guide for High School Composition Work

I. Grammatical Structure.

Words – Sentences – Clauses – Phrases.
Punctuation.

II. Rhetorical Structure.

Subject – Predicate stand out.

Short – Periodic – Parallel – Imitate.

Unity – Emphasis – Coherent.

III. Vocabulary.

Latin – Purposely use new words – Read much – Topical method.

Look up meanings – Get exact word – Write much – Thorough discussions.

Dictionary – Synonyms – Not too many words – Not too few.

IV. The Paragraph.

200 words; Single point, unity; Clearness, emphasis.

Coherence – Introductory paragraph or sentence.

Chain – Summary – Know your subject – Restrict it – Be thorough.

Treat fully what is important – Plan.

V. Style.

Clearness (Intellect) (Depends upon choice and arrangement of words.)

Force (Emotions) (Interesting).

Elegance (Taste) (Mechanics).

Clearness. Understand subject – "Long and short of it" – Illustrate.

Force, How acquired.

By sympathy – By earnestness – By practice – By use of Figures Simile – Metaphor – Metonymy – Synechdoche – Personification – Apostrophe.

Elegance.

Penmanship – Punctuation – Neatness – Spelling – Margin – Identation – No smartness, affectation, bombast, bravado, vulgarity, awkwardness, crabbedness, mawkishness, fussyness, slang,

VI. Narration.

VII. Description.

VIII. Exposition.

Explanation – Clearness – Short and definite – Topic sentence – Summary – Definite plan.

IX. Argumentation.

Prove – Define clearly – Logic – Authoritative – Facts – Great difficulties – Be fair – Tell truth – Brief – Avoid religion, politics, and ethics, question of personal taste.

X. Conjunctions. Use variety.

The Teaching of Grammar

By definition grammar is a description of those usages of the English language which are now approved by the best writers and speakers. The field of English grammar is limited to etymology and syntax. Etymology has to do with words, and syntax with sentences. Since English is practically inflectionless, there is no basis for continuing the conjugation system in the moods and tenses. Because of their different forms for different cases, there is some reason for declining the personal pronouns.

The rules of syntax are useless in English, since it is in the main an inflectionless language. They are a survival of Latin grammar.

In the grades, the instruction should deal only with what is plain and simple. The controverted parts should be left out. In the eighth year a connection between grammar and literature should be established. This may be done, in part, by analyzing now and then, sentences whose construction may be more or less obscure. Sometimes it is well to analyze a whole paragraph or stanza. This will show that analysis is the great instrument of interpretation.

There should be a great deal of drill upon the irregular verbs, upon shall and will, the personal pronoun, the passive voice forms, correct use of adverbs, conjunctions, and punctuation.

Grammar gives us a knowledge of the facts and structure of language. Structure is learned by analysis. Emphasis should be laid on this part of the work.

The leading object in the teaching of English grammar is not to teach us to speak and write correctly. There are several purposes why we study grammar. Correctness is only one, and it is best attained indirectly. Grammar involves a vigorous exercise of the logical powers, analysis, abstraction, comparison, inference. It is the logic for the masses. To analyze correctly, one must think; hence, the study of grammar trains us to think. As said before, one should become acquainted with the structure of English. Grammar furnishes a standard of judgment in expression.

The rules of grammar furnish a means for self criticism; as, for instance, in the case of the irregular verb or the personal pronoun. The study of grammar combined with that of literature enables children to outgrow some of their bad habits in speech, some of which are downright barbarisms and vulgarisms.

For some years mere authority must prevail, but in time the rule will play its part.

The controlling factors in the use of English are imitation and habit, working through association and literature. Speech and writing are arts, and must be learned by speaking and writing. Rules help us indirectly to better speech and writing. Correct speech comes through the ear. The sound image is the great agent. Grammar has to be studied in and through sentences, and to be extracted from sentences by the pupil, if it is to be really taught. Today we depend largely on the instruction in composition and in literature for correctness in speech.

Grammar should be taught both incidentally and systematically; also, it should be taught both inductively and deductively; each depending on the stage of the work. Most of the work in the elementary school should be inductive and systematic, which work should be followed by a deductive course.

The first step, the incidental, should be carried on in connection with the work in composition and literature.

The regular verb presents no difficulty for the child, but the irregular verb is troublesome. Up to the seventh and eighth school years, the work with the irregular verb should be done inductively and incidentally. Correct use at this stage is obtained largely by criticisms, example, and unconscious imitation, thus building up the habit of correct use. The end may be obtained by quite a different method after the child has reached the analytic stage in his school life. A list of fifteen or twenty of the more troublesome verbs may be placed before the pupil, giving the forms of each in the three tenses; viz., the present, the past, and the perfect participle. Instead of using the tense terms, it may be more convenient to use the expressions, first form, second form, and third form; as, **see, saw, seen.**

The following table contains a list of the most troublesome verbs. If these be thoroughly mastered, the self-critical spirit will have been so well developed into a habit that errors in the use of the other verbs will not be likely to occur.

First Form.	Second Form.	Third Form.
begin	began	begun
do	did	done
drink	drank	drunk
fly	flew	flown
go	went	gone
lie	lay	lain
rise	rose	risen

First Form.	Second Form.	Third Form.
see	saw	seen
shake	shook	shaken
take	took	taken
write	wrote	written
lay	laid	laid
sit	sat	sat
set	set	set
swing	swung	swung

The two principles, "The second form of an irregular verb is used in the past tense only," and, "The third form of an irregular verb is used in all perfect tenses, and in all forms of the passive voice," are good guides in this drill work.

Buehler's "Practical Exercises in English" may be found to be very helpful on account of the amount of practice material that it contains.

If a pupil says, **I seen it,** or **I have saw it,** ask him to justify the form of the verb used in the light of the above principles. By doing this a few times, he learns to choose with care the form of the verb used, thus forming a habit of correct speech with respect to tense forms.

Again, should the pupil say, "The water is all drank up", call his attention to the fact that the sentence is in the passive voice. He should know by this time the different forms of the verb "Be"—**is, are, am, was, were;** the three forms of the irregular verbs; and what a transitive verb is.

So, knowing these, it should be an easy matter for him to know when a verb is in the passive voice, that is, when some form of the verb Be is joined to the third form of a transitive verb. (Metcalf's English Grammar p. 153.) The child should learn the definition for the passive voice. He will see by the definition that the verb **drink** is a transitive verb, also that the verb Is, is one of the forms of the verb Be. The definition states that the third form of the verb should be used with some form of Be to form the passive voice; therefore, the sentence should read, **The water is all drunk up.** It is because of the possibility of the error of using the second form instead of the third in the passive voice that the subject needs some careful attention on the part of both teacher and pupils. Generally, grammar grade pupils, and many times those of higher grades, do not know when a sentence is in a perfect tense. They need to be told that the auxiliaries **have** and **has,** when used in a sentence, put it in the present perfect tense, and that **had** is the sign of the past perfect tense.

By reference to the second rule given above, it will be seen that the third form of an irregular verb is used in all perfect tenses.

The science of grammar belongs rather to the higher than the lower grades. The subject and predicate should be taught in the fifth school

year. This is a very important step. In the sixth year, the principal parts of speech may be taught; and, also, the easy and most common modifiers; such as, phrases, clauses, adjectives and adverbs. This work is inductive. The pupil should learn many of the chief facts relating to inflection and to syntax in the elementary school from the fourth school year up. The work should be done systematically. Grammar should be made a separate and systematic study for about one year. Possibly a very good time in favorable cases is to take a part of both the seventh and eighth years for this intensive work. At other times it should be taught incidentally. If conditions should not be favorable, it might be best to spend the time in grades seven and eight in the study of literature and composition and the inductive study of grammar in connection with them. In such a case, grammar should be taken up deductively in the first year of high school work.

I. What to teach, and what to omit.

a. The point of view is to develop thought power.
b. Omit Orthography and Prosody.
c. Omit the verb conjugations.
d. Omit the rules of Syntax.
e. Omit Concord, Government.
f. Omit Order, and elliptical sentences.
g. Omit controverted parts.
h. Emphasize sentence structure
   Clauses—phrases.
   Omission of verb.
   Omission of principal clause.
   Omission of essential words.
   Participle phrases out of place.
   Comma Sentence.
i. Analyze considerably.
j. Show relation between Grammar and Literature.
k. Drill much upon the irregular verb, shall and will, passive voice forms, punctuation, adverbs, conjunctions and the verb "Be".
l. Teach thoroughly:
   1. The elements of a sentence.
   2. Classification of sentences.
   3. Punctuation, and analysis of sentences.
m. Drill upon phrase and clause modifiers.
n. The seeing of relations is the essential thing.

II. The reasons why it should be taught.

a. The leading object is not that it teaches us to speak and write correctly.
b. We should know the structure of English.

c. It is the logic of the masses; hence, it trains us to think.
d. It is a standard of judgment in expression.
e. It furnishes a means for self criticism.
f. It, in part, helps us to outgrow the vulgarisms and barbarisms learned in childhood.

III. How it should be taught.

a. Imitation and habit, working through association and literature.
b. Correct speaking and writing must be learned by practice in both.
c. Indirectly by rules.
d. Through sentences.
e. In connection with Composition and Literature. (Incidental.)
f. Both incidentally and systematically.
g. Inductively and deductively.
h. By drill on troublesome, common expressions.

IV. When it should be taught.

a. Begin in the fifth year. Teach the subject and predicate.
b. In the sixth year, teach the parts of speech, and also the easy and common modifiers.
c. Make the work deductive in the seventh year.
d. Combine it with literature in the eighth year.

Practical Grammar

Points to Emphasize in Eighth Year.

Theme Work.
Irregular Verbs.
Personal Pronouns.
The Possessive Case.
Shall and Will.
The Verb "Be".
Definitions.
Infinitives and Participles.
Adverbs.
Adjectives.
Analysis.
Sentence Structure—Clauses, Phrases, Conjunctions.
Passive Voice Forms.
Punctuation.

In theme work, the pupil and the teacher together may choose the subjects.

Other than the above, touch the balance of the subject lightly.

Theme Writing

Write about something that was interesting to you at the time it took place. Just let it be any commonplace experience or event. Write it naturally. Write it just as you would talk it to a friend. Think it happily, and say it clearly and interestingly with your pencil or pen.

Of course there are certain conventional forms that this written conversation is required to take on. For instance, it must have a name. The name is the title which should be written about one-eighth of the distance below the top of the page in the middle from side to side. The first paragraph should begin about the same distance below the title and about one-fourth of the distance from the left edge. The spelling should be good; sentences must be punctuated correctly; they should be correct, grammatically; the penmanship should be plain; each paragraph should be indented; capital letters should be used correctly.

Form is of first importance until it is learned. The mechanics of elementary composition are:

Legible penmanship.
Correct spelling.
Simple punctuation.
Capitals.
Margin lines.
Correct grammar.
Abbreviations.
Paragraphing.
Heading of a letter.
Closing of a letter.
Addressing an envelope.
Folding a letter.

Write about your work—how you did it—what you made—difficulties you met with—what you learned, etc.

We learn form by written practice in form. One thing at a time is a very good plan. Difficult subjects in content should not be attempted until form is practically mastered in its elementary parts.

If a boy is using tools he may describe one, or tell how to sharpen or use it, or he may discuss some phase of his work.

If a girl is cooking or sewing, let her discuss some phase of her work in like manner; but all the while, the written work must take on the conventional forms which are required by the "mechanics of letter writing".

Only such parts of the work that are clearly understood should be discussed in written form. Attempt nothing that is hazy in the mind until it is made definite and clear.

The teacher should show the pupil good models, and insist that the work be done with painstaking care as to details in form. Form must be insisted upon at first in composition just as it is in spelling. Content is not important at all until form is fixed into a habit; then content should receive the attention, but not till then. Form always, before content in both composition and spelling until it becomes fixed more or less as a habit.

To correct a composition, direct each pupil to read his theme silently, to see if he has said all he wants to say on that subject. See if each sentence has one central thought; whether there are any mistakes in spelling, punctuation, capitals, margin lines, indentations, title, etc.

The pupil is to consult texts and ask the teacher for help at any time, concerning the work. Correct all mistakes as they are found. Correct by erasures and interlineations.

The teacher should always find something good in every theme, and mention it. Pupils should learn to avoid the errors they are constantly called upon to correct. Unless in extreme cases, it seems unnecessary to ask a pupil to rewrite a theme. Look for one error at a time.

Some teachers do all the correcting themselves. This does not seem to be the best way. It seems best that the pupil develop the self-critical spirit under the teacher's guidance. The self-critical spirit in the individual is the great end in view after all. Without this, nothing of permanent value has been attained: with it, much.

When a pupil expresses a judgment orally, one of his own, ask him to put it on paper at once. That is a theme of the best kind.

A Plan for the Correction of Composition Papers

(a) Allow the class from fifteen to twenty minutes to write on a subject, selected from the class work of some preceding lesson.

(b) Then each pupil is asked to read, silently, his own composition to discover whether all he has to say on that subject is contained in the paragraph. If he finds his work faulty, he is told to correct it at once, by erasing and interlining, and adding to.

(c) Then the pupils are told to read their compositions a second time to determine, (1) whether each sentence has only one central thought; (2) whether the sentences are well constructed or not; (3) whether there are any mistakes in capitalization or punctuation; and (4) to see that every word is properly spelled.

In making these investigations, the pupil is to have the free use of his texts and should be encouraged to apply to the teacher for counsel and assistance. All mistakes are corrected as they are found.

The reading aloud of two or three compositions each day and the questions referred by the pupils to their teacher, show how well the work of correction has been performed. By this method the majority of pupils acquire facility in correcting their own errors. By looking for one kind of an error at a time, nearly every important one is detected and corrected. With practice, children soon learn to avoid the errors they are constantly called upon to correct.

In the common schools 15 minutes is sufficient to do this work in. Except occasionally, the compositions are not to be copied off after the corrections are made. As said before, the corrections are to be done by erasures and interlineations.

Under 2 in "c". Sentence Structure.

The most important points in sentence structure to be regarded are the following:

a. Omission of verb.
b. Omission of principal clause.
c. Omission of essential words.
d. Participial phrases out of place.
e. The comma sentence.

How to Teach Spelling

Each pupil in the class takes his spelling book, and opens it to the lesson that is to be assigned.

chevalier	diversion
equation	mucilage
paregoric	Vladivostok
presidential	separate
tragedian	Caribbean
naphtha	cannibal
coupon	epaulet
sacrifice	manageable
badinage	accommodate
recommend	calendar
Mediterranean	indelible
Philippines	exhilarate

The teacher pronounces the first word in the lesson clearly, distinctly, and correctly, then the class pronounces it with distinctness and in concert. Each word in the lesson is pronounced in this way. In this pronouncing work the teacher calls attention to any difficult part in any word in either pronunciation or in spelling; as, chevalier (shev), equation (shun), paregoric (short a, short o), presidential (shl), tragedian (one dot above a) in pronunciation, and separate, calendar, believe, receive, indelible, recommend, accommodate, Carribbean, cannibal, in spelling. Pronouncing the words correctly, and carefully observing the form of each, with especial emphasis being placed upon the difficult parts, help to fix a distinct image of each word in the child's mind through both ear and eye. This pronouncing and close observing work requires about two minutes. The class immediately writes the lesson from the teacher's pronunciation, in two or three minutes.

Without pronunciation, the teacher then spells aloud each word to the class, when each pupil criticises his own work, and indicates by a check-mark each word missed. This step requires one minute. Each pupil immediately indicates in his speller the words that he missed by checking each with his pencil and underlining the letter or letters which he had wrong. This step will require about one minute.

It will be observed that the work done thus far has been the assignment of the lesson. Experience teaches that a part of the members of the class will have mastered the entire lesson by this time; the others, however, will ordinarily not have learned one or more words. We will sup-

pose a pupil has not learned from one to five words in the assignment of the lesson. These, then, are all that he needs to prepare on for tomorrow's lesson. In the test, just made, he has shown that he can spell the balance of the lesson; and, therefore, does not need to study the words which he can spell, but only those whose spelling is uncertain to him. His task is thus made definite and easy. His attention is not only called to a hard word, but to a particular part of the word, which enables him to focalize his attention on the part that troubles him; thereby, in all probability, quickly mastering it.

Experience teaches that in nearly all cases the missed words can be learned in five minutes; the assignment requires seven minutes, and tomorrow, the recitation should be completed in five minutes. So the assigning, studying, and reciting of a spelling lesson should not require more than seventeen minutes a day in grades five, six, seven and eight.

In the final test, two minutes should be given to the written work; two, to the criticism part; and one to writing on the stub of the spelling pad the words that have been missed, after which the class is ready for another assignment for the following day.

The assignment when properly done is a very important part of the lesson. It is here that time and efficiency are gained. Most of the responsibility in the matter of good spelling rests upon the teacher. Teachers should stick to the spelling book; it should be mastered. Some teachers try to follow the plan of collecting words every few days from other studies; as geography, history, grammar, etc., to be learned. This plan makes a text book builder of the teacher. This she has neither the time for, nor the ability to efficiently do. The selection and grading of words had better be left to the specialist.

Spelling should be written.

Some say that a child should always know the meaning of a word before he tries to learn its spelling. There is no objection to a child's knowing the meaning of a word but on account of waste of time, and because of divided attention, there is objection to the child's looking up and learning the meaning of words in the spelling lesson. The meaning of words should be learned and used in connection with the composition work.* The meaning of many of the words in the spelling lesson will have been acquired by the pupil in his reading. The teacher may briefly illustrate, by a sentence, the meaning of a new word. This introduces the pupil to the word, as it were, which is all that is necessary so far as its spelling is concerned. The writer can spell **badinage** but he cannot use it. For a long time he could spell **dodecahedron,** but he did not know its exact means. Just now, he can spell **synclinorium,** but he can not define it; he has never used these words in sentences. The meanings can be acquired in a very short time when needed. He already has their spelling,

and is ready to write and use them correctly as soon as their meanings are known.

That which needs emphasis is **form, not use.** A teacher wished the class to use **toward** in a sentence. A boy wrote, "I tored my pants."

In primary written composition, **form** should precede content. As it is in composition, so it is in spelling. **Form** is not necessarily dependent upon meaning. To illustrate, how does the meaning of the word separate help to determine whether the heavy letter should be an **a** or an **e.**

It will be seen that seventeen minutes a day means that not over one and one-half hours a week are to be devoted to the spelling lesson on the part of the pupil. More than this is time misused. The above estimates have been made on a basis of twenty-four words a day. In the lower grades, ten words may be found to be enough. The speller should be used in all grades, from grade one, up. As to method in the beginning, the teacher should write the words upon the board one at a time. The children write each word as did the teacher. The teacher then covers the words she wrote upon the board, and pronounces them to the class. The children write the words. The teacher then uncovers the words upon the board, and the children compare their work with hers, and correct any errors which may have been made.

Spelling is exact observation plus down-right, arbitrary memory. The teacher should lead the child to carefully observe the form of the new and difficult words in the spelling book. This will tend to cultivate in him a self-critical habit which will lead him to closely observe the spelling of new words which may be met with elsewhere.

Pupils should not be burdened with dictionary work. Meaning, markings, accent, syllabication, derivation, etc., are helps when kept in subordination, but there is danger of their over-emphasis to the neglect of spelling. A little of this work may be safely done from day to day, say from two to five words, but to require much is to confuse the child. It divides the attention, the result of which is poor spelling. The **use** of words belongs to composition instead of to spelling. It has already been said that the class should use spelling pads that have a stub end for the mis-spelled words. Each pupil, individually, should be reviewed occasionally upon the words he has missed during the term or year.

In the writer's judgment, the chief object sought for in spelling is the correct written spelling of words, from the first, apart from meaning, syllabication, accent, derivation, oral spelling, etc. These divide the attention from the written form.

The way to learn to spell is to observe closely the form of a word and, by sheer effort of memory and drill in writing it, fix that form in the mind.

Syllabication in long and difficult words should be emphasized as an aid to the ear to help in the imaging of the word. Teachers should carefully prepare on the spelling lesson in advance, with reference to correct pronunciation and difficult parts. Most poor spelling is due to one of three things; the teacher is uninformed as to the right method, or she is not prepared on the lesson, or she is indifferent. Sometimes carelessness may be found in either the teacher or the pupil, or both. A careless teacher may easily start a habit of carelessness in a child when it is beginning to learn to spell. Great care should be taken to establish, early, the habit of careful observation as to the exact form of words.

Synonyms, prefixes, and suffixes may be studied with much profit in years seven, eight, and nine. As to rules, James A. Garfield once said: "Who ever learned to spell by rule?" It may be all right, for a time, to have a few rules for spelling, as a means to an end, but, after all, spelling is a matter of arbitrary memory in written practice. Close attention should be given to spelling in all composition work.

* The writer discusses this phase of the work in his treatment of composition.

A Discussion of the Public Library

Wisconsin has a fine library system developed in the form of splendid libraries, rules and regulations, a corps of trained librarians, a superior cataloguing system, etc. In fact, Wisconsin leads in library work. But the scheme has not worked out entirely along the lines which the original promoters hoped for. The original thought was that the public library should reach the whole of the people, which, thus far, has not been fully realized, though we may hope that we are moving in that direction. What the people need, the common people, the laboring people, the mechanics, the masses, the people who have not much extra time in life—is a library system that has a strongly democratic organization. The library today presupposes on the part of those who use it some spare time. But a laborer and his wife who toil ten or fifteen hours a day can not go to the library to draw a book and read it and return it. They have not the necessary time. The people in the state who use the public libraries most, have the time to do so. They are the minority as to numbers. The great mass, the majority of our people have but little spare time, and do not use the public libraries nearly so much as they should. The suggestion is that the library be taken to the people by some person who understands both the people and books. He takes these books to the people who should read them; shows them how to read them; is careful that the books are not lost, and when they are read, sees that they are returned.

A book is taken into a home where the mother is busy with her daily home tasks. The book, we will say, is Jane Addams' "Democracy and Social Ethics" which contains one chapter entitled "Household Adjustment". The librarian is desirous that this mother read this chapter. It may be impossible for her to find the time and energy to read it for some considerable time. The book should be left in her home say a month and, if necessary, longer, thereby breaking the fourteen day limit. The rules and regulations should be adapted to the needs of the people reading the books. The common people can hardly be expected to adapt themselves to all the present library rules and regulations. In fact, if this scheme is to be of service to the toiling people, the present system of rules and regulations must be modified.

The practice of sending a box of books into a factory is not sufficient. That presupposes that the workman will come to the box to select a book and that he knows how to select a book. That presupposes an interest on his part in books. These presuppositions are in a large measure untrue. On the contrary, the workman must be studied, and the book

must be studied. The library specialist should know what particular books would be of service to that particlar man, and furthermore, the specialist should know what particular chapters in these books will meet the particular needs of some particular workman. So the specialist selects the books, selects the workman, selects the chapter and selects interesting passages in that chapter which he points out to this individual worker, thereby getting him started to be interested in a book. The library habit on the part of the masses does not yet exist. It must be built, it must be developed, and that is the work of the library specialist.

Jane Addams understands the needs of the common people. They love her writings. Also they delight to read such books as "The Woman Who Toils," "The Long Day"; Jacob Riis' Books; Hunter's "Poverty"; Spargo's, "The Bitter Cry of the Children"; Salmon's, "Domestic Service"; Clark's, "Trust Problems". Such books as these are the books that the common people will read—books that treat of great social and economic problems in simple, concrete terms. This is one way of enlightening the masses. One great difficulty is to get books that are written to the people. It would seem that this great task must be done through the influence of the library system. Take such a book as Dr. Ross' "Sin and Society" and have it written to the people like Jane Addams writes, and they will read it and it will help them. These people cannot help themselves—they will not. They must be helped before they can act right in and on their environments, which must be understood by them. These environments cannot be understood by them unless they can be made more intelligent. This reading will show them how to vote in their own interests; show them how to help themselves; show them many injustices by which they are surrounded; and will show them how to solve those injustices both for themselves and for their children. This reading will show them how to more intelligently bring up their children; it will enable them to understand the simple truths in such great problems as child labor, white slavery, more leisure, the importance of being a student, trust problems, etc.

The great mass of people is not ignorant of their own deliberate choice. They are ignorant because of conditions. The ideas contained in books are sealed to these people. These ideas cannot be taken to the common people by word of mouth—the task is too great. It would seem that the only possible way of getting the stores of knowledge contained in books to the people is by having them rewritten in plain language and scattered among the people.

The libraries have many books treating of social, economic, scientific, and industrial phases of life, but these books are written for university students and people of a considerable degree of education. They are technical and are written in such a way that the average man and woman

cnnnot understand them and do not get interested in them. The common mind is not much interested in statistics and technical terminology. It is after large truths simply told. The common mind is interested in the great social problems, if these are presented simply and plainly so that it can grasp them. One great difficulty which has been experienced in this work has been to get suitable material put up in suitable form.

The subject library system is being developed in the state university under the direction of Miss A. L. Scott in the extension department. This plan promises to meet the situation in part very effectively by collecting from many homes current periodical material, classifying it, putting it up in suitable form, and distributing it where it is needed.,

To summarize, it would seem that, first, books treating of social and economic questions should be rewritten in such form that the common mind can comprehend their teachings. Second, the public library system should take on a more democratic form of administration than at present obtains. Third, the present system of library rules and regulations should be modified to meet actual conditions; to-wit, these people should not be fined for the retention of books over time. That matter should be left to the specialist to adjust. As to time, some persons may require a considerable length of time to read a book. Duplicate copies of certain books will be needed. Fourth, in every city in America where there is a public library there is urgent need of a library specialist, whose business it would be to carry portions of the library to the common people, and to carry them back to the library building, or to see that it is done; and whose business it would be to study the laboring, toiling classes, and to know their needs. Fifth, the children in the laborer's home, in the poverty home, in the delinquent home, very likely do not use the public library. Their reading is trashy—much of it is wicked and vile. They do not know such books as "Little Men", "Little Women", "Toby Tyler", "The Lives of the Hunted", "Grimm's Fairy Tales", and so on. It should be the librarian's business to see that these children do read such books, and that such books are taken into these homes, and put into the hands of these children. This can be done through the library specialist.

ERRATA.

Page 27.—The second word in third line from bottom of page should read "meaning."

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0 021 728 850 2